The Middlebury Campus

VOL. CXXII, No. 5 | MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT, OCTOBER 12, 2023 | middleburycampus.com

Snow Bowl introduces night skiing for upcoming winter season

By TAMSYN TAPTICH
Contributing Writer

Worth Mountain lift at the Snow Bowl. COURTESY PHOTO

After years of planning, the Middlebury College Snow Bowl will finally open for night skiing this winter. In addition to its regular 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. hours Wednesday through Friday, the Snow Bowl will remain open for night skiing until 9 p.m.

This winter will mark the first time the Snow Bowl will offer night skiing after it was originally announced last spring. LED light fixtures will be added to "The New Sheehan Lift," what ski patrollers are referring to the old Sheehan Lift, as well as the Discovery Zone to allow for skiing safely during these later hours.

Located in Hancock, Vt., the Snow Bowl is a ski area situated in the Green Mountains, just 13 miles east of Middlebury with over 700 acres of terrain. As a small mountain close to the college, the Snow Bowl has been a valued winter recreation location for members of the Middlebury community since operations began in 1934.

Derrick Cram, ski shop manager and long-time Snow Bowl employee, said he is especially excited about the addition of LED lights because Snow Bowl employees have been discussing this idea for years.

Cram attributed the successful implementation of the new infrastructure for night skiing to Mike Hussey, general manager of the Snow Bowl, who spearheaded the initiative.

Hussey told The Campus in an interview last March that the new lights will include trails for all skill levels from beginner to expert. He explained that these additions to the Snow Bowl will hopefully expand community access to the mountain.

"It will benefit the community as a whole," Hussey told The Campus last spring. "We want to make sure that everyone is given the time to ski, and I think this really does it."

Cram described how the updated infrastructure and expanded hours of operation will hopefully improve the finances of the Snow Bowl, which is owned and operated by Middlebury College, by bringing in more skiers each day.

"This is a chance for the Snow Bowl to get to a break-even point and not have to be subsidized by the college as much," Cram said. "It was an opportunity for us to hopefully make the Snow Bowl more financially sustainable."

Cram also emphasized that if the Snow Bowl sees the financial benefits from these changes, that could mean more opportunities for future improvements. "Hopefully [we will] have more capital to invest in more improvements and building out the Snow Bowl to be more attractive for upcoming generations," Cram said.

According to Cram, as a small ski area, the Snow Bowl can only accommodate so many people at once, so additional hours will increase access to a broader number of people. Students that might be busy with classes during the day will now have a better opportunity to ski at the mountain.

"[Students can] get some runs in, especially if you have a busy schedule, and those hours might be more appealing," Cram said.

The additional hours during the week will also be crucial for high schoolers to take advantage of the Snow Bowl, according to Cram. He shared that the Middlebury Union High School ski team could not previously train at the Snow Bowl due to the mountain's limited hours.

"One of the things that ultimately killed the ski team at the high school was the fact that it wouldn't give the students early release to come to the Snow Bowl to train," Cram told The Campus. "They couldn't practice, so they couldn't race."

Sofia Bobroff '26, a member of the Middlebury College Ski Patrol, said she is thrilled about the prospect of night skiing and what it will mean for the Snow Bowl..

"I'm super excited about the addition of night skiing at the Bowl, not only because it's super fun, but also because it will create lots of exposure for the Bowl," Bobroff wrote in an email to The Campus.

Due to the mountain's new operating hours, the Tri-Valley Transit will be running later shuttles between the college and the mountain, Cram said. While specific shuttle times have not yet been released, an updated schedule will be released soon with the new transportation information..

EJ Bartlett, marketing and communications director of MiddCORE and the Innovation Hub, was also enthusiastic about this new night skiing option and touched on the community aspect of the expanded hours. Bartlett explained that during winter in Vermont, people feel holed up in their houses by the cold and the dark, but night skiing will be an exciting opportunity for people to have something active to do with other community members.

Although many students and local residents look forward to expanded hours, staffing has been a sticking point in planning for the late night hours, Cram said. He explained that while the Snow Bowl has worked hard through the off-season to ensure they have the infrastructure in place for the upcoming winter, they will need extra hands to successfully operate the new extended hours.

"We're hiring students, and we're going to have a variety of people working up there; there's all kinds of different hours available," Cram said. Positions for which the Snow Bowl is hiring include ski school instructors, ticket sellers and lift operators, according to the mountain's website.

The Snow Bowl will be open for the season with both day and night skiing in December.

KNOLCI: A FUSION OF FLAVORS CELEBRATING 20 YEARS AT THE KNOLL

By MAGGIE BRYAN
Senior Arts & Culture Editor

This past Friday's Dolci dinner, cleverly coined "Knolci," merged two Middlebury favorites: Dolci, Middlebury's student-run restaurant, and the Knoll, the college's farm. The Knoll's bountiful harvest served as the inspiration for the event and provided most of the meal's produce, which Dolci chefs used to craft a vibrant and creative five-course meal. The occasion brought together students, collaborators and supporters of the Knoll to celebrate the site's twentieth anniversary and a successful fall harvest.

The process of creating any Dolci dinner begins well before Friday. In the case of "Knolci," a collaboration between Dolci and the Knoll had been dreamed of since before the Covid-19 pandemic. Then, about a year ago, soon-to-be Dolci Head Chefs Zoe Gieger '25 and Sophia Giliberto '24 brought the dream to reality and initiated planning. In January 2023, Gieger and Giliberto worked with Winter Term Knoll-focused Independent Study students and Associate Director of the Knoll Megan Brakeley '06 to look through the season's seed order and begin thinking about what would be available for an early-October harvest.

During the spring and summer, the team continued developing a menu, a process that required flexibility because of this summer's unpredictable weather.

"Given the extreme weather challenges of this growing season (early season heat, followed by record-setting rainfall totals, thunderstorms, and extremely buggy conditions) they were also able to adapt the menu last-minute. For example, our cabbage and kohlrabi didn't mature in time, but the watermelon radish (with a little pickling to coax the flavors out) harvest was perfect," Brakeley wrote in an email to The Campus.

Gieger, who was also one of the Knoll's summer interns, said that throughout the planning process, the event coordinators paid close attention to the types and quantities of crops that the Knoll normally donates to Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects's (HOPE) so that Knolci would not be using crops or resources that would be more needed at HOPE's food shelf.

In the weeks leading up to the dinner, the chefs finalized the menu and began sourcing and preparing food. Ingredients that could not be harvested from the Knoll were purchased from Addison County Relocalization Network's food hub, the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-Op or were available at Atwater Dining Hall.

During the final week leading up to the dinner, Dolci prep chefs come into Atwater every day to chop, mix and marinate ingredients in anticipation of the big day.

Securing a coveted seat at any Dolci dinner is, without fail, a competitive frenzy. Dolci's email list comprises over 300 students, ranging from dining hall loyalists to the most pretentious of student food critics. The Tuesday evening before each dinner, Dolci sends out a Google Form, which is open to submissions for a mere fifteen minutes. Within the hour, a fortunate few (this time 22 students) are randomly selected as lottery winners and are sent two tickets. In the few short days before Friday, lottery winners must carefully choose a plus-one to fill their sought-after seat.

On Friday, Oct. 6, this round's roster of guests gathered in the entrance to Atwater Dining Hall for their highly anticipated feast. Given the lack of a dress code, Knolci attire ranged from black-tie formality to farm-ready casualness. This week's event also saw multiple bolo ties, perhaps a formal take on this dinner's rustic-agricultural focus. Dolci servers led guests to their seats, where they joined friends and strangers at the dining hall's typical round, eight-person tables, which were elevated for the evening of fine dining by candles, crisp tablecloths, menus designed by Charlotte Xu '26.5 and bouquets of flowers that were harvested from the Knoll on Friday morning.

The first dish to appear from the kitchen was an assortment of snacks including tomatoes, crackers, cheese, tomato jam, pickled carrots and mustard, made by Brakeley, served family-style on a wooden board. As guests grazed, Brakeley and Knoll summer interns Cassia Park '24.5, Aisha Thapaliya '25.5 and Sheila Camacho '25 gave an introduction to the meal and the preparations that went into it.

Next up was pickled watermelon radish with miso honey butter on crostini. Offering perhaps the most complex flavor palette of the night, the miso honey butter artfully combined the umami of miso with the creaminess of butter and sweetness of honey in a couple of exciting bites. Topped with vibrant watermelon radish and garnished with edible flowers, the crostinis were nearly as beautiful to look at as they were amazing to taste.

MANAR AL-RIKABI/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Watermelon radish with honey miso butter on a crostini, Bean and squash tostados topped with edible flowers, caramelized onions and tomatillo sauce.

Beginning the bulk of the meal, servers then brought out family-style kale salad with honey pistachio dressing, apples and crunchy kale chips on top. From the start of Knolci's planning stages, Gieger and Giliberto were set on incorporating

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Middlebury professor founds new company to address climate change through the lens of storytelling

CAMERON RUSSELL / COURTESY PHOTO

Megan Mayhew-Bergman and Mike Farber co-founded GreenStory Collective to help organizations craft messages about climate change.

By TEJAS SRINIVASAN
Editor at Large

Vermont has recently faced unusual and severe weather events, from a late-May frost that significantly reduced the crops of commercial apple orchards to the record rainfall and flooding in July and August that caused significant damage locally, which have challenged the established sentiment of the state as a "climate haven." In the face of these challenges, Megan Mayhew-Bergman, assistant professor of English and director of the Bread Loaf Environmental Writers' conference, has founded a new company to help companies fight the climate crisis.

In September, while on sabbatical, Mayhew-Bergman co-founded GreenStory Collective, an environmental storytelling agency, with Mike Farber, a former lawyer and communications executive with experience in several sectors from technology to NGOs. Mayhew-Bergman and Farber's new venture plans to partner with companies, nonprofits and other organizations taking on the climate crisis, in order to help them use language and stories to better communicate their mission to the public.

One of the biggest challenges nonprofits and companies face in trying to combat climate change is storytelling, according to Mayhew-Bergman. GreenStory Collective's goal is to help the scientists, inventors and lawyers in the climate space present their complex work in a clear, accessible way, while honoring the complexity of climate issues.

"It's like teaching someone how to write a Beatles pop song," Mayhew-Bergman said. "How do you get to the clearest, most effective, most universal language where values and passion come through?"

Co-founders Mayhew-Bergman and Farber designed GreenStory to create StoryKits, a set of narratives based on research and interviews that can serve as the basis for clients' marketing and media content. They hope to support organizations working on climate-related campaigns through securing funding or educating the public. While she was unable to discuss the specific clients with whom they have begun work, Mayhew-Bergman was enthusiastic about GreenStory's ventures in green tech, robotics, alternative energy and large conservation organizations.

Mayhew-Bergman emphasized that the work she and Farber are attempting to do is not greenwashing, a term coined in the 1980s that describes how companies tout false claims about their commitment to combating climate change in an effort to hide other ventures they are pursuing that fundamentally hurt the planet. Rather, GreenStory's work is focused on consulting for scientists, nonprofits and other organizations to illustrate how companies and organizations can communicate better. Mayhew-Bergman said she is enthusiastic about being a thought leader in the field, and ethically opening doors for people dedicated to fighting climate change.

Inclusivity is a large part of GreenStory's mission. Inspired by an interview for a Guardian story in 2019 she did with Heather McTeer Toney, a former EPA administrator and the first Black mayor of Greenville, Miss., Mayhew-Bergman wants to go beyond Big Green, the large environmental agencies in cities that are difficult for everyday people to join. She aims to highlight emerging companies, as well as non-traditional entrepreneurs, women and people from marginalized backgrounds jumping into the climate space.

"My objective is to widen people's understanding and passion for the good, clean work that's going on in the world, and make space for innovation," Mayhew-Bergman said. "I want to celebrate people who are out there trying to solve [the climate crisis]."

The inspiration for GreenStory comes from a variety of projects Mayhew-Bergman has undertaken in the past. In addition to being the author of books such as "How Strange a Season" and a professor of creative writing, Mayhew-Bergman draws upon her experience working as a climate reporter, mainly for The Guardian, as well as the nonprofit she founded called Open Field. She does similar work at Open Field and is willing to share her efforts, pro bono, to help schools, communities, lawyers and any other organizations open to learning more about fighting the climate crisis. Mayhew-Bergman urged more people to step into the conversation and learn what it means to be an environmental communicator.

GreenStory's philosophies also stem from her work with the Conservation Law Foundation, a New England-based environmental advocacy organization where she was a senior fellow from 2019 to 2023. Mayhew-Bergman did similar work with that foundation, teaching op-ed workshops and climate communication and partnering with schools and independent bookstores in Vermont.

Mayhew-Bergman noted that the climate communication practices she tries to teach avoid heavily self-righteous language and honors the complexity of climate issues. "Drop us away from the polarized, polemical, 'exclamation point' manifestos, and drop us into something that is specific and heartfelt and open, and honors why this is difficult," she explained.

Gage Schrier '24.5, a student of Mayhew-Bergman, enjoyed learning to write about difficult subject matter in her class. "Her accessible explanations of largely inaccessible topics renders her specific style of advice, or teaching, as integral to many Middlebury creative writing majors' development," Schrier told The Campus.

Mayhew-Bergman noted that she enjoys her dual roles as a practitioner of storytelling and a professor teaching it, adding that her work for GreenStory and other ventures has helped her better teach her students. In a reality where humanities and literature departments are under threat, Mayhew-Bergman encourages her Middlebury students not to lose hope for the power of storytelling.

"I believe that the humanities are employable," Mayhew-Bergman said. "Our vocation as storytellers is about human connection, processing justice, injustice, beauty, better decision making."

Sandy Robinson, director of Middlebury Health Services, retires after eight years

By WILLIAM REED
News Editor

Middlebury Health Services Director and nurse practitioner Sandy Robinson is retiring after eight years with the college. Robinson's departure is met with both gratitude for her service and anticipation for the future under the leadership of her successor, Alison Finch.

Robinson began working at Middlebury in December 2015, when she managed the Health Center's daily operations while also running a part-time clinical practice. She then assumed the role of director of Health Services in October 2020.

Robinson helped guide the college through the uncertainties of the Covid-19 pandemic and the creation of new policies to protect the Middlebury community. Her journey into the healthcare field was the result of her deep-seated desire to make an impact.

"A career in Nursing offers so many options and opportunities," Robinson wrote in an email to The Campus. "I was always looking for the next thing that I could do to make a bigger impact. I loved taking care of individual patients, but then felt that I could affect the care of many patients by looking at systems and processes of care."

Robinson's tenure as director of Health Services was marked by numerous achievements and memorable moments during the Covid-19 pandemic. She spoke of the satisfaction she found in executing key routine tasks, many of which became even more important in the midst of the pandemic, such as ensuring that incoming students were adequately vaccinated.

Robinson said the pinnacle of her career came during Covid-19 when she led a dedicated team in successfully bringing students back to campus safely in the fall of 2020.

"It was some of the hardest and most important work that I have ever done," Robinson wrote. "The big payoff was that day in August of 2020 when we welcomed students back to our testing center at Virtue Field House. One student said to me, 'I was terrified to come back. Then when I saw all of this, I knew I was safe.' Huge. My best day at Middlebury."

Looking to the future, Robinson offered insights into the evolving landscape of healthcare services for college students. She emphasized the importance of reaching out to students to ensure they know how to access services. She highlighted Middlebury's collaborative, multidisciplinary model of care, which supports students comprehensively and addresses their unique needs.

"College health centers are still evolving systems and processes for care to meet the needs of students who were adversely affected in their education by the isolation of the pandemic," she wrote. "Other students may have experienced marginalization or have no experience in accessing health care. Reaching out to students so that they know to access services is important work. The health and wellness needs of emerging adults continue to evolve and change. College health services need to be able to respond."

As she enters retirement, Robinson looks forward to spending more time with her family, reconnecting with friends and enjoying the natural beauty of Vermont. She intends to remain a familiar face at Middlebury College sporting events, ensuring her connection with the college community endures.

Barbara McCall, associate vice president for student health and well-being, commended Robinson's contributions as exceptional during her time at Middlebury.

"[Robinson] pioneered new ways to serve students in Centeno House, our first teams of contact tracers, and was integral to the COVID Ops team that worked to think through and then meet all of the needs students might have in quarantine and isolation in the early months of the pandemic," McCall wrote in an email to The Campus. "She was a valued member of the leadership team in the Center for Health and Wellness."

McCall expressed excitement about welcoming Alison Finch as the new director of Health Services, recognizing that Robinson's legacy will undoubtedly inspire future endeavors in student health and well-being at Middlebury College.

THOMAS NEVINS / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Sandy Robinson Retires as Middlebury's Health Services Director.

MIDDLEBURY'S BLACK STUDENT UNION BUILDS COMMUNITY, SEEKS TO IMPROVE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK STUDENTS

By MANDY BERGHELA
Local Editor

For decades, the Black Student Union (BSU) has been a critical organization at Middlebury, dedicated to creating a safe and inclusive space for Black students. The BSU meets every Saturday at 4:30 p.m. in the Coltrane Lounge to foster meaningful conversations surrounding racial equity while addressing the unique challenges and isolating experiences of attending a predominantly white institution as a Black student.

Over the course of the summer, current BSU board members had long, impassioned discussions over Zoom to brainstorm strategies that would elevate the organization from a club to a thriving cultural institution for generations of Black students at Middlebury to come.

"In order for us to even have community, we need culture," said Dominic Browne '26, treasurer of the BSU. "That is our goal of the BSU. Every one of us [Board members] had a period of time where we felt that we did not belong. And we need this to be more heard, and recognized at the very least. We are over the performative acts of things, and we want to create that culture of belonging, because this is not just about the BSU, this is about Black students just living here."

The primary focus of the BSU is to ensure that Black students feel a sense of belonging rather than isolation at Middlebury, according to Browne. They aim to cultivate a campus atmosphere where their presence is celebrated, their voices are actively listened to and their experiences are consistently validated.

"There was a period here where I felt like this is not where I was allowed to be," said Arsema Lecko '26, co-President of the BSU. "It felt illegal walking by the chapel, and I thought, 'This was not created for me,' which although in a way can be empowering, it can also be very isolating, and make you feel like you don't belong. But that is so not true. We are just trying to show everyone that we all deserve to be here."

A key strategy the organization employed at the start of the school year to boost engagement and attendance in their revamp involved actively reaching out to Black students campus-wide and extending invitations to join the BSU meetings.

"When a Black person comes up to you and personally invites you to an organization, you feel like you belong there," Lecko said.

Co-President Cynthia Walton '25 also experienced feelings of isolation during her first year at Middlebury. It was when the president at the time of the BSU personally approached her and introduced her to the BSU that she discovered others who had similar experiences.

"It was very nice to see people with shared experiences then," Walton said. "I could see however there was more of a disconnect then, and that is something we wanted to change within the BSU. People would come to meetings and then leave. But now this year, I am seeing everyone, everywhere, and that is something we really are pushing for, a sense of community."

The BSU has already organized many events and discussions for Black students on campus this year. These initiatives provide a dedicated space where individuals can escape the constant white gaze and white expectations that are faced every day, the organization's leadership said.

The club has hosted a variety of different kinds of events this fall such as discussions on the potential commodification or sharing of Black culture, in addition to volunteering opportunities and social events. The BSU intends to continue hosting a series of similar discussions throughout the year, offering BSU members a safe and encouraging platform for open dialogue.

The BSU will also host events for Alumni of Color Weekend, an event taking place on the weekend of Oct. 20–22 which celebrates college alumni and students of color. The BSU will host the annual Black Women's Brunch, where female-identifying Black alumni and students alike have a space to talk about their experiences at Middlebury together.

On that same weekend, the BSU will collaborate with Special Collections for an open house exhibit titled Black Students at Middlebury, which will showcase Black student life and the BSU throughout the years.

On Halloween weekend, the club will collaborate with other student organizations including PALANA, Alianza at Midd, Women of Color and UMOJA, Middlebury's African Student Organization, for the annual Spooky Soiree, which will serve as a fun social event for all people of color on campus.

"We want to bridge that connection between Black people and other people of color, so we are planning future collaborations as well with various other cultural orgs on campus for some events," Lecko said.

The BSU also plans to have student liaisons who will represent various class years as well as athletic teams. These student liaisons will have a dual responsibility, acting as both advocates for their respective grade or group during BSU meetings and sharing information among Black students within their class years.

BSU board members (left to right) Yvette Fordjour '26, Arsema Lecko '26, Menen Ebrahim '26, Regan Olusegun '26, Cynthia Walton '25, Dominic Browne '26.

BSU meeting at Coltrane Lounge. CAMERON RUSSELL / COURTESY PHOTO

According to US News and World Report, Black students currently make up only 5% of the Middlebury student population, making the BSU an essential resource for this underrepresented group on campus. Middlebury's mission statement underscores the commitment to creating an "inclusive, residential environment" for all students, but according to BSU members, to truly achieve this mission, it is imperative to establish spaces where students who are often marginalized can cultivate a deep sense of belonging within the context of a predominantly white institution.

"The BSU is at the forefront of changing a culture on campus." Regan Olusegun '26, event coordinator for the BSU said. "We are inspiring and teaching the first years that we can change how it feels to be Black at Middlebury. It is crazy to think that in a year from now, or two years from now, a Black student at Middlebury will have a very different testimony as to what it is like being here than we would have had last year. That in itself is the most rewarding thing."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Former Middlebury professor Honoree Fleming killed in Castleton, Vt.

By CATHERINE GOODRICH and SUSANNA SCHATZ
Contributing Writer and Senior News Editor

Former Middlebury faculty member and retired Dean of Vermont State University Castleton Honoree Fleming was fatally shot last week on the Delaware and Hudson Rail Trail just south of Castleton's campus and 30 miles south of Middlebury, according to the Vermont State Police.

Fleming's body was found by a passerby on the trail on Thursday, Oct. 5 at around 4:30 p.m. and was reported to the Vermont State Police (VSP), launching a large manhunt and the closure of the Castleton campus through the weekend. The Vermont Chief Medical Examiner determined the cause of death was a gunshot wound to the head, and the manner of death was homicide, according to State Police.

"Scores of students benefited from Dr. Fleming's teachings and research," Vermont State University Castleton wrote in a Facebook post announcing her death on Oct. 7.

Fleming was an assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry at Middlebury from 1988 to 1994. She is remembered fondly by long-time Middlebury faculty members Jay Parini, D. E. Axinn professor of English and Creative Writing and Julia Alvarez '71, writer-in-residence emerita.

"She was an inspired teacher and beloved mentor at Middlebury and elsewhere," Parini wrote in an email to The Campus.

Alvarez became friends with Fleming and her family after they met at the Bread Loaf Writers Conference in the early 1980s. "When they came to Middlebury, I realized, wow, this gentle woman always curious about you was actually a fine chemist and smart researcher — she had kept her own professional achievements quiet," Alvarez wrote in an email to The Campus. "She met you as a person first. A radiant presence, solid and genuine."

Alvarez said that she somewhat lost touch with Fleming and her family when they moved down to Castleton, but remained connected through Parini. "I kept up with them through Jay Parini, and I was glad that she and Ron found a warm welcome in that college and community," Alvarez wrote.

The suspect in the shooting is still at large. State Police are asking the public, businesses and hunters in the Castleton area to review their surveillance systems in order to gain any more information about the shooting. In a police report issued Monday afternoon, Vermont State Police reported that detectives have received over 200 tips since Thursday. The report also wrote that police have been "interviewing potential witnesses, nearby residents and people who were on the trail around the time of the shooting, among other individuals."

Although the suspect is still under investigation, Middlebury's campus is not said to be under any threat. "The Department of Public Safety is communicating closely with the Middlebury Police Department (MPD) regarding this incident, and at this time, MPD has indicated that there is no information to suggest any threat to our community," Middlebury Public Safety wrote in an email to the college community Saturday afternoon.

"Honoree was a part of the Castleton family and was beloved by faculty, staff, and students. This is an unbelievable tragedy for the Castleton campus and for all of Vermont State University. Honoree will be deeply missed," Vermont State University said in a statement.

Fleming's impact among faculty members at Middlebury remains, as well. "I'll never forget our countless conversations — often after a lovely meal. May she rest in deep peace," Parini wrote.

This is an ongoing investigation, and anyone who knows anything related to the incident is encouraged to contact authorities. Vermont State Police request that anything suspicious be reported to them by calling 802-773-9101 or by completing an anonymous report on their website.

MACKENZIE SCOTT DONATES $20 MILLION TO CHAMPLAIN HOUSING TRUST, AIDING VERMONT'S HOUSING CRISIS

By MADELEINE KAPTEIN
Local Editor

The Champlain Housing Trust — the largest community land trust in the U.S. — received a $20 million donation from MacKenzie Scott through her philanthropist fund, Yield Giving. The contribution marks the largest donation the trust has received in its nearly 40 years of work towards providing affordable homes and related community assets in northwest Vermont, a region facing an ongoing housing crisis amidst a broader state-wide shortage.

Previously named The Burlington Community Land Trust, the Champlain Housing Trust began in 1984 with financial and technical assistance from the City of Burlington. Serving Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle counties, the trust currently owns over 3,000 housing units including houses, condominiums, cooperatives, multi-family rentals, supportive housing for persons with special needs and short-term housing for the homeless. The trust staffs approximately 150 employees and has an operating budget of about $27 million per year, with a developmental budget of between $60 and $80 million.

In a late September interview with VTDigger, CEO Michael Monte said that he learned of Scott's specific donation in July, though he had been aware of a potential donor since February.

"We are extremely grateful to Ms. Scott for the confidence she and her team have placed in our efforts to address the region's housing crisis, the work we do in supporting people in need, and the track record of serving our communities over the last 40 years," Monte said in a September press release announcing the donation.

COURTESY PHOTO/CHAMPLAIN HOUSING TRUST FACEBOOK
Michel Monte, CEO of Champlain Housing Trust, announcing MacKenzie Scott's $20 million donation.

In the press release, the Champlain Housing Trust also described some of its intentions to utilize Scott's gift to further its mission of developing permanently affordable homes and related community assets. The trust will use the funds to grow and reinvest in properties that serve the most vulnerable populations, expand the Homeownership Equity Program and educate prospective underserved homeowners, particularly BIPOC households that have been obstructed from home ownership by racist policies, according to the press release. The trust hopes to boost the number of households exiting homelessness through the addition of more rental housing.

Champlain Housing Trust also plans to improve its community centers — the Old North End Community Center in Burlington and the O'Brien Community Center in Winooski, VT — and expand its community programming to support residents currently housed through the trust.

Bert Johnson, professor of political science at Middlebury College, identified housing trusts as a creative approach to housing and noted their ability to stabilize neighborhoods, making them less susceptible to gentrification.

However, despite the progress Scott's donation will make for affordable housing, it is far from an adequate solution to Vermont's housing crisis at large, Johnson said.

"I think there's no discounting the importance of philanthropy, but this is a one-time infusion," he said. "In terms of any long-term sustainable solution to the housing problem, there's a lot of work to be done, both in the private sector and the public sector."

Vermont has the second-highest per-capita rate of homelessness in the country, trailing California, according to figures published in December 2022 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Approximately 2,500 Vermonters are currently housed in motels through a Covid-19 pandemic relief program, which costs the federal government about $8 million a month. Governor Phil Scott's administration pushed to eliminate this program in June due to a loss of emergency funding, which would have left 1,800 households, including about 600 children, unhoused. While lawmakers ultimately passed a bill to extend the relief program to allow the majority of its participants to keep their rooms until they find alternative housing, uncertainty and fear among the motel residents continues to run high as policies change and waitlists for permanent housing grow.

Despite the political tensions surrounding policies to address the housing crisis, Johnson said Democrats and Republicans seem to agree that Scott's donation is a step in the right direction.

Having already donated an estimated $146 million to 24 nonprofits across the U.S. in the first half of 2023, Scott's donation to the Champlain Housing Trust brings her philanthropy back to Vermont for the first time since her $9 million gift to the Vermont Foodbank in 2020.

In May of 2019, Scott, ex-wife of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and the 47th wealthiest individual in the world, signed The Giving Pledge, committing to donate the majority of her wealth as a billionaire to philanthropy. Scott founded Yield Giving in 2020 and launched a $250 million Yield Giving Open Call in March of 2023, inviting community-led and focused nonprofit organizations in the U.S. to apply for grants.

"Organizations best suited to this initiative will enable individuals and families to achieve substantive improvement in their well-being through foundational resources," the Yield Giving Open Call webpage reads. Only organizations with a budget ranging from one million to five million dollars were eligible to apply.

"We couldn't imagine a better time, with Vermont's well-documented housing challenges and the State's ongoing commitment to building affordable housing, to give our community the opportunity to do even more and being able to sustain this effort over time," said Jeff Smith, board president of the Champlain Housing Trust, in reference to Scott's decision in the September press release.

LIV, LOVE, LOCAL: MINIFACTORY

Liv, Love, Local is a column highlighting local businesses of Vermont, especially cafés and restaurants in the Middlebury area. Through interviews with owners, I want to highlight the specific successes and challenges that come along with small business ownership in Vermont, the hard work owners and employees put into these businesses, and how these spots serve as places to build community and connection.

By OLIVIA MUELLER
News Editor

On a recent Saturday morning in Bristol, every bright-yellow chair in Minifactory was occupied as the brunch crowd queued up to order their weekend treats. Minifactory opened in the spring of 2022 as a market and café that also serves as a home for the jam manufacturing of owner V Smiley's jam company, V Smiley Preserves. Two years in, Minifactory has become an acclaimed destination, recently featured in the New York Times' 36 Hours series on Burlington, Vt.

Balancing community needs and a passion for vegetable cookery and jam has been a key part of the journey for Minifactory. Bristol is a small town that receives less foot traffic than larger cities like Burlington, making the recent feature in 36 Hours all the more meaningful.

"[The 36 Hours feature is] such a collective thing that's really about the town of Bristol, and what's happening there on the business, community wide level," Smiley said. "Between that and V Smiley Preserves being in the New York Times this year, those two things together... I definitely am feeling very, very appreciative."

Customers who have been visiting the shop since doors opened have shared that they feel like part of the business's collective success. "I thought [that] was really sweet and was my hope in the early days of getting Minifactory going," Smiley said.

This past year has been one of changes both big and small for Minifactory and V Smiley Preserves, including a reconfiguration of V Smiley Preserves' wholesale program and adjustments to the full span of Minifactory's offerings, from its regular dishes to special pop-ups with visiting chefs.

Smiley said she has been on a mission this year to tweak and update the menu with the seasons. "My strength is around vegetable cookery and working with produce," she said. "My happy thing is just getting to work with vegetables and fruit and thinking about flavor construction."

In crafting a menu, the Minifactory team aims to balance a mix of healthy and comforting options, while also showcasing the use of preserves in some dishes.

"It's trying to demonstrate the usability of preserves and everyday cooking, trying to weave all those things together, and make as many folks happy as possible," Smiley said.

By slowly eliminating lower-selling items, establishing signature twists on familiar breakfast staples like a biscuit sandwich with a hint of jam and incorporating more produce-driven dishes, Minifactory is striving to improve on all aspects.

One of Smiley's goals for 2024 is to streamline the current queuing system to better separate quick take-out orders from orders for sit-down customers. During typical rush times in the shop, the long line can be daunting, Smiley said.

"Most people are on the same clock," Smiley said. "We're not going to change when people get hungry or when they want their coffee. We have to really focus on moving folks through the line, getting them the thing that they came for."

On the days Smiley does not spend cooking at the café, she works on the marketing for and managing of both Minifactory and V Smiley Preserves. Working seven days a week to manage two businesses and a 20-person staff has made the total volume of V Smiley Preserves' current wholesale jam accounts unsustainable, she said. As a result, V Smiley Preserves is scaling back their wholesale production, while still maintaining accounts in a couple of key cities to support e-commerce.

"We'll be at the Burlington Farmers Market, still at Minifactory and online; that stays the same. It's just that behind the scenes, we need to make way less jam," Smiley explained.

In order to maintain relationships with local producers and farms as the volume of fruit needed for preserves has decreased, Smiley has shifted to selling more wholesale produce such as seasonal berries and tomatoes at Minifactory for retail that would have previously been used in the jam production.

V Smiley Preserves' variety of unique, seasonally-inspired flavors will remain intact, however.

"We're about to make plum hyssop lemon verbena. That's what I'm probably most excited about," Smiley said.

Sweetened with honey and showcasing the herbs and aromatics of the garden, the verbena jam also pairs well with cheese, Smiley said. During apple season, Smiley plans to use local crab apples from Stein Orchard in Monkton, Vt., and Windfall Orchard in Cornwall, Vt. V Smiley Preserve is making its own apple preserve this season.

OLIVIA MUELLER/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Minifactory serves up drinks and food in downtown Bristol.

Minifactory will also continue to host its pop-up dinner series featuring a variety of cuisines. Local Nepalese cook Ananda Tamang just wrapped up a six-month food pop-up in the Minifactory space. La Chapina also currently offers Guatemalan cuisine every other week for pre-order at Minifactory until the end of the year.

Prioritizing a community focus while staying true to V Smiley Preserves and Minifactory's original missions of putting quality produce first has been critical.

V Smiley said she believes successful business is driven by individual passion and perseverance, channeled by some need in the market.

Marketing and newsletters between Smiley's two businesses take on different tones. V Smiley Preserves was founded in 2015 as a self-named venture, and Smiley lets her communications for the jam brand take on a more personal tone directly from her.

"The jam company is mine. My voice, one hundred percent," she said.

Minifactory communications, on the other hand, are less personal and reflect its role as a community space.

In the year ahead, Smiley is looking forward to celebrating successes like the recent New York Times features of Minifactory in the 36 Hours series and another feature for V Smiley Preserves and allowing both brands to continue evolving.

"Those things happen with luck but also through a body of work," Smiley said.

Continuing that hard work alongside her team and finding a more sustainable balance for both brands will be key to preserving the Minifactory magic.

Minifactory is located at 16 Main Street in Bristol and is open Monday and Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Friday 7:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"EXTRORDINARY ORDINARY": *MOLLY HAWLEY'S PAINTINGS EXHIBIT IN TOWN*

By SOPHIA SHEN
Contributing Writer

Amidst midterm stress and unpredictable weather, art serves as a means of relaxation. Local artist Molly Hawley's exhibition "Extraordinary Ordinary: Landscapes and Portraits," currently on display in the Jackson Gallery at Town Hall Theater, beautifully captures vivid fall foliage, seaside scenery and lifelike portraiture.

Hawley's title, "Extraordinary Ordinary," aims to convey that she has found great beauty and inspiration in people and places that are not particularly staged or unusual. She wants the audience to know if you learn to see clearly you will be able to find great beauty and inspiration.

"Perhaps most important is the joy I get from seeing and portraying the beauty of the visual world," Hawley told The Campus. "In portraiture, that joy is also a result of revealing the character and mood of a person as those things are shown in physical form. Most of my subjects I know and love, and that love inspires me to portray them as beautifully as I can. In landscape painting, I also aim to celebrate the beauty I see all around me. And very often I seem to be attracted to scenes which mirror my inner feelings and moods."

The exhibit includes a rich variety of paintings, featuring seaside scenes on Cape Cod, snow in Vermont, autumn foliage scenes and colorful portraits. Hawley currently resides in Ripton, Vt., and most of the work currently featured in the Jackson Gallery has been done in these past 18 years she has lived in Vermont — capturing what Hawley said was the simultaneous solitude and beauty of living in Ripton.

COURTESY PHOTO/TOWN HALL THEATER
One of Hawley's works in the exhibit.

"Some might walk into the gallery and say the works are by different artists, but it is in fact one person's perspective on different scenes," said Ellie Friml, the gallery manager. "Her paintings are very diverse."

While the exhibit includes some paintings where Hawley began by working from photographs, she has also spent a lot of time painting from life in both landscapes and portraits. When working from photographs, Hawley said her goal is not to replicate them exactly, but to allow the looser quality of the paint to breathe more life into the pictures. Even the so-called "mistakes" are left embedded in the final version of a painting, she said.

"The portraits have dynamic personality and invite you into the rooms with their subjects," Lisa Mitchell, executive director of Town Hall Theater, said. "The descriptive details, such as the girl in the tutu and muck boots on her first day of school, bring you into a highly personal and endearing moment in time."

Mitchell told The Campus she has heard from visitors that Hawley's images evoke personal memories for audiences, which she credits to the depth of reality in the paintings. "One woman swooned over the Cape Cod images," Mitchell added. "The beach landscape reminded of her long-time visits to Martha's Vineyard. The boy on the beach could have been her son, she said."

Inspired by the writings of Hawley's spiritual teacher, Adi Da Samraj, the exhibit features a multimedia work made of fabric and thread. The piece represents abstract forms rather than observed physical forms, similar to many of the exhibit's other works. Hawley said she plans to continue painting landscapes and portraits as well to incorporate more fabric works inspired by her spiritual teacher.

Hawley, who began her undergraduate studies at Middlebury, went on to specialize in graphic art at the Boston Museum School and The Cleveland Institute of Art, where she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in printmaking. Hawley has worked extensively with other media, including pastel and oil painting, as well as multi-media works that combine fabric, photography and drawing.

This exhibit is the second time Hawley has had work featured in the Jackson Gallery. According to Friml, she and the other staff at Town Hall Theater have continued to want to work with Hawley because she is skillful, accomplished and able to fill the space of the room well with her large paintings.

COURTESY PHOTOS/TOWN HALL THEATER
Hawley's exhibit showcases both landscapes and portraits.

"Hawley is a very warm person, and you can feel that her warm personality comes through her work," Friml said.

Hawley's exhibit will be on display in the lower level of the Jackson Gallery until Nov. 4. Town Hall Theater is located at 68 Pleasant Street, and is open Monday through Friday from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Hawley's own gallery, True Water, is located in Ripton and welcomes visitors by appointment. More information can be found on Hawley's website.

MIDDLEBURY SKATEPARK PROJECT HOSTS MOVIE SCREENING FUNDRAISER AT THE MARQUIS

By KATRINA SCHWARZ
Contributing Writer

Every day, Middlebury students on skateboards, scooters and other forms of wheels spend hours flying back and forth on the asphalt outside of Proctor Dining Hall, rain or shine. While this space on Hepburn Road provides a location for these activities for college students, the town of Middlebury does not yet have a recreational skatepark available to locals.

Ethan Murphy, president of the Middlebury Skatepark Project, and other members of the project are intent on changing that, however. Through fundraising efforts and community involvement, the project is steadily moving towards its goal of building a town skatepark. Optimistic predictions indicate that the construction may be completed in as little as two years, with many of the funds raised donated by individuals and local businesses, according to Murphy.

The Skatepark Project held a fundraising event last Wednesday, Oct. 4, in conjunction with the Middlebury Marquis Theatre to help raise these funds.

The Marquis provided its theater space for a screening of the film "Skate Dreams," a 2022 documentary capturing the evolution of female skateboarding and prominent female skateboarders. The film highlights a seldom-seen characteristic of sports like skateboarding in representing the sport's opportunities for community and connection. While skateboarding is now an Olympic sport, it still faces a stigma around its validity as a sport. Directed by Jessica Edwards, Skate Dreams highlights the immense talent and tenacity that it takes to master skateboarding, while also showcasing the sense of belonging that can stem from the sport, especially for people who are not involved in organized sports otherwise.

COURTESY PHOTO/ETHAN MURPHY
The board of Middlebury's Skatepark Project at the their fundraiser at the Middlebury Marquis Theater.

Ben Wells, owner of the Marquis Theater, told The Campus that he was motivated to host the film screening because he believes in giving back to the local community.

The Marquis is not alone in its support of the Skatepark Project. A number of local businesses and organizations, such as The Teen Center and Middlebury Parks and Recreation have shown their enthusiasm for the construction of a local skatepark.

On the Skatepark project's website, Lindsey Fuentes-George, executive director of The Teen Center expressed her enthusiasm for the project — "What we also find compelling about the Middlebury Skatepark is its ability to be equitable regardless of socioeconomic backgrounds. The culture of a skatepark is naturally accepting of alternative life choices and supports the many who feel abandoned by the Middlebury community, which aligns with our mission."

Murphy further explained the sense of belonging that a skatepark can bring to Middlebury and the surrounding area.

"It's estimated that between 14–20 percent of youth don't participate in organized sports, and so it's really about meeting those people where they are and providing an opportunity to be physically active and have fun," he said.

Murphy became the president of the Skatepark Project a year and a half ago. He had heard whispers about a movement to build a skatepark in Middlebury since he began work as a media production specialist for the college Film Department in 2014, but said he had yet to see any serious momentum on the project. As a skateboarder himself and the father of two children, Murphy saw a gap in the community when it came to skateboarding.

"The superintendent of Parks and Recreation told me that there was a lot of interest in building a skatepark, but that there was nobody to collect that interest. I started then and there," he said.

The project has made some progress since The Campus last covered it in the fall of 2022. A location has been selected next to The Teen Center and the Middlebury Municipal Pool off of Buttolph Drive and all of the project's approvals are in place, along with some initial permitting.

Recently, a wooden mini-ramp was installed in the location of the future skatepark to help fill the role of a skatepark until the concrete space is completed. While this ramp is useful, especially in the short-term, the Skatepark project website noted that wooden ramps require a lot of upkeep and do not last as long as concrete. Concrete also provides the best grip in all types of weather, which is an important asset for an outdoor space in Vermont.

For now, the focus of the project remains on fundraising. While efforts to raise money by selling t-shirts and stickers as well as hosting fundraising events have been successful, it has still been a struggle to secure adequate funds, Murphy said. Partnering with the college on the project, Murphy added, could help expedite the process.

"We hope that [our fundraising] shows financial institutions that we are sticking around and doing everything we can to fundraise," Murphy said.

Middlebury students can become involved with the Skatepark Project in a number of ways. Once a month, there is an open meeting in the Ilsley Library Community Room for people who want to learn more about the project or get involved, including Middlebury students.

"You have to be an advocate, you have to be willing to work for it, and we as an organization are willing to do that," Murphy added.

Loneliness and the built environment at Middlebury and beyond

Op-Ed

***Joshua Glucksman** is a member of the class of 2025.*

I have recently been thinking a lot about alienation at Middlebury. All of you are aware that Ev, who was a friend of mine, died in Forest Hall, but some of you may not know that Yan, another student and beloved teammate of mine, died in the same building over two years ago. The eeriness of two deaths in the same building leads me to wonder how our living spaces could have both direct and indirect impacts on our well-being. I am curious about the reciprocal relationship between two things: how our understanding of the world affects the places we live in, and how the places we live in influence our understanding of the world and our well-being. I think about how, despite often being called a "bubble" protected from the social realities of the world, Middlebury College often mirrors the patterns of alienation seen in our wider society. On a slightly optimistic note, I found that asking these questions in light of the tragedies of Ev and Yan's deaths made me see more clearly the problem of isolation at Middlebury in general. By investigating mental health on this campus and how it correlates with trends in rural, suburban and urban areas, I believe that it is moreso ideologies — those that seem uncontrollable and anonymous like "the market," "globalization" and "modernity" — than solely geography that explains how our build environments cause so much alienation.

How does the problem of alienation manifest on our campus? In The Campus' Zeitgeist survey last year, several questions highlighted mental health concerns and their disproportionate impacts on students here. Some lowlights from the survey: The only gender group that had a majority (53%) who never struggled with eating and exercise were cisgender men, while, for example, every trans woman surveyed had struggled in that area. White students surveyed were statistically the most happy, and, in the most extreme case, they were 28% happier than the least happy racial or ethnic group (Middle Eastern and North African students). Lastly, mental health was the fourth most common reason — behind academics, extracurriculars and jobs — for respondents to feel like they could not be social. While these results are concerning, there is one key aspect that went unexplored by the Zeitgeist questions: the connection between physical space and loneliness. For a campus that is small, walkable and "close-knit," I wonder about the ways in which our ability to form community is reflected in statistics like the number one reason students sought sex and romance being "companionship," and the fourth, "loneliness."

The built environment — a concept that most simply describes how humans physically construct the world but can also refer to philosophical ideas such as how we think about "natural" and "unnatural" — is clearly connected with mental health when looking at statewide and nationwide trends. First of all, the way we live in America is quite individualistic and segmented — over two-thirds of homes in the US are detached (physically separated), single-family homes. The historical context of these low-density houses can often be traced to restrictive ordinances and racial zoning that stopped low-income communities of color from living in whiter areas. Sometimes this was accomplished through outright bans on which people could live where, but most of the time it was done by preventing affordable, and thus dense, housing. Similar tactics with more sinister veils are still used today by privileged communities to keep housing density low. In addition to perpetuating race and class segregation, detached, single family homes and lack of infrastructure in rural areas can contribute to adverse health effects for those experiencing homelessness and insecure housing, and leave many Americans feeling unhappy in less dense areas.

While I was initially interested in applying this architectural lens and using geography, I realized that Middlebury College does not neatly fall into the category of rural or suburban. Sure, you could make the case that the broader area is extremely rural and that the town itself is more populated than many places in Vermont, but a college campus in general seems to add complexity to any of these categories. I paired this idea with the fact that loneliness, while often correlated with physical proximity and geography, is not conclusively explained by it. For instance, while the number of people living alone in the last century in America has increased from 5% in 1920 to 27% in 2016, most of these individuals live in higher density environments. While it is clear that low-density living communities have prevented us social creatures from fully receiving an adequate sense of belonging, it is not just geographic proximity that causes the challenges in fostering connections but American worldviews about community and "success" as well.

An explanation that fills this gap comes from philosopher Otto Paans and his idea that alienation is manifested through the built environment, but that it does not always have to just mean if people are far apart then they are lonely. Instead, he argues that modern Western ideology, specifically, capitalism, individualism and scientific progress are baked into our spaces and "actively reflects values and ideas about society and its organization," which can happen even in denser living areas. Essentially, a feedback loop is created when individualism (think Margaret Thatcher's idea that there is no such thing as society) is reflected in how we physically order our world, and how that in turn makes us lonelier. The key insight from Paans is that this individualism can be seen more obviously through architectural choices like single-family houses, but is also disseminated through less obvious design. "Utilitarian non-spaces" is Paans's idea that space can be constructed to emphasize efficiency and curb spontaneity — just picture all of the constructed paths on McCullough lawn that let everyone speed off to go back to work after Ev's vigil, instead of an environment that would emphasize lingering and slowness. Another of Paans's ideas is that even if we are close to others in proximity, places like colleges can become "instructive spaces," or a set of physical features that direct behaviors and reinforce identities; in our campus context, I think about the ways that Middlebury's layout constantly reinforces the idea that we are "students" and that it requires, as many of Ev's friends attested to at the recent vigil, walking to the Knoll or going on a long bike ride to feel like you can "escape" the Middlebury bubble in order to fully embrace your other identities or priorities

Middlebury College, in my experience, is nowhere close to the worst it can get when it comes to alienating environments, or even other colleges. However, in light of two student deaths in the past two years — which is unacceptable — we must reckon with how the dearth of care and connection is a symptom of oppressive structures. For those of you living in dorms or large living spaces and have not met your neighbors, I would implore you to ponder on what greater connection looks like on campus and seek out the clubs and organizations that are either doing work to create radical communities or are asking these questions about what barriers exist preventing these connections. On that last note, I would invite a reflection from Matthew Desmond, a scholar who asks us how we can redefine some of our values and thus reshape our world: How can we move from a "freedom that is contingent on our bank accounts" to a "freedom that comes from shared responsibility, shared purpose and gain, and shared abundance and commitment?"

JOSHUA GLUCKSMAN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

A memorial for Evelyn Sorensen '25 outside of Forest Hall.

"WHAT IS SPECS PANTHER, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?"

Op-Ed

***Aiden Levy** is a member of the class of 2025 and a SPECS Peer Educator.*

You may see one of the SPECS peer-educators walking around campus, sporting our luxurious navy blue merch and dragging a (slightly broken) cart teeming with goodie bags and sex "supplies," and think: "Huh?"

We get it, but what many of you may not know is that SPECS is more than orientation week's (insanely popular) Sexy Bingo.

SPECS — Sex-Positive Education for College Students — is a year-round peer-educator organization dedicated to empowering Middlebury students with the knowledge, skills and resources to make healthy and informed decisions in what we hope to be a community-wide sex-positive environment. Our multifaceted approach to sex-positive education includes group and public workshops and initiatives regarding consent, anatomy, pleasure and STI awareness and destigmatization. More than ever, SPECS is striving to increase our community engagement and outreach, with a critical avenue being the establishment of a column in The Campus: 'SPECS Panther.'

You might once again be asking, "Huh?" What we really mean is that we are committed to bringing a sexy, fun and cool representation of a MiddKid who is properly equipped with inclusive and accurate sex-positive information. We recognize that Middlebury students come from all walks of life where their experiences with sex education can vary from none to extensive. We hope that through SPECS, all can be armed with an expansive toolkit so that every MiddKid is empowered to make sexual decisions that best suit both their and our community's health, safety and comfortability. Our SPECS panther mascot symbolizes the pillars of the organization, as well as the goals of our umbrella office that funds us: Health & Wellness Education. In fact, the SPECS faculty advisor, Karly Beavers, assistant director of Health & Wellness Education, provides a layered, nuanced and professional lens to our training. No two Middlebury faces, experiences or expressions of sexuality are the same, and each person's individuality and diversity are traits that SPECS strives to cherish.

Yes, it may look silly that we are sporting a posed panther on their side as the emblem for our organization, but that very fact is one of our most fundamental goals: bringing a lighthearted side to sexuality. We know and recognize that many groups of people have difficulty and face systemic obstacles to obtaining and experiencing sex-positive information and action, ranging from societal white supremacy, heteronormativity, transphobia, misogyny and ableism. Thus, it is paramount that there be an outlet for low-stakes, inclusive and conscientious discussion about sex on Middlebury's campus — made accessible, sexy and welcoming in the form of the panther.

Now, you're probably still wondering, "What does SPECS actually do?" Do not fret, dear reader, it's a lot more than you may think! SPECS has workshops, both for the public and for specific groups like sports teams, affinity groups and special interest houses. SPECS strives for a symbiotic relationship with the campus. Sometimes we directly reach out, and we also encourage interested groups to email us, Instagram DM us or ask an anonymous question. Year-round, we offer a range of selected content in the workshops, including "Pleasure," "Yes! No! Maybe! Consent and Communication," "FYI's on STI's" and a holistic combination of "It's Your (Sex) Life." Through our dynamic education model that incorporates viewer participation, partial lecture and demonstrations, periodic check-ins for questions and an overall safe and comfortable environment for all parties to actively engage and learn, our workshops aim to uplift individual and collective awareness and well-being.

SPECS Panther seeks to educate and spark independent dialogue, not be the end-all be-all resource on campus. As Feministing editor Maya Dusenbery succinctly put it in 2015: "Seriously, God help us if the best we can say about the sex we have is that it was consensual." At SPECS, we promote the vast outlets and resources found on and off campus, whether that be for emergency contraception, reproductive health care, condoms, STI testing, reporting or gender affirming care. The bar for sex should not be simply agreeing to it, but incorporating critical communication skills, knowing what you and your partner like and may not like, being cognizant of substance intake, leaving your assumptions at the door and ultimately keeping it fun. We look forward to future installments of our column, where we will delve into specific, relevant and interesting topics, including sexual scientific concepts, current news and debunking tropes.

At this point, you are probably (hopefully) nodding along, but may be thinking, "What can I do to make a difference on campus?" Again, the answer is a lot more than you think. Perhaps the biggest challenge to safe and positive sex-education is the danger of silence. Not just a Middlebury phenomenon, silence often holds the keys to furthering stigmatization, creating hostile environments, forcing prejudices onto one's self and others and closing your ears to information that challenges assumptions. In fact, one key theme SPECS highlights is disproving common sexual misconceptions, while bringing to light other unexpected truths. For an individual on campus like yourself who wants to contribute to sex-positivity, an easy and subversive tool is to simply talk about it (and I know that we all love to talk on this campus). Using the knowledge, expertise and resources we promote and discuss at SPECS, we encourage you to help break down the walls of stifling silence by engaging in conversation — wherever, with whomever, and about whatever is most comfortable, easy, and safe for you. We at SPECS are your peers — we do not enforce behaviors or tell you what you can or cannot do with your body, but instead we paint a holistic picture of positivity, safety and inclusivity that chips away at a healthier and happier student community.

Now the question we ask to you all is, "So now what are you going to do?..."

FOUR STARS FOR INN ON THE GREEN

Op-Ed

***Bea Parr** is a member of the class of 2025.*

Last spring during the housing draw, the class of 2025 nervously refreshed the housing portal to watch incoming seniors swiftly claim Forest doubles, Kelly suites, and Chateau rooms — options once called "junior housing" — right before their eyes. With only one Lang suite and eleven Chateau doubles left before junior selection had even begun, my housing group's middle-of-the-pack timeslot looked increasingly grim. We were left to choose between Saturday mornings spent cleaning up after a school-wide KDR basement party, intruding on a social house we were not a part of, taking a chance on summer draw or... the notorious Inn on the Green.

In a last ditch effort to ensure we would all be in the same building, my housing group chose the Inn. And I'm glad we did.

From the outside, the Inn looks slightly haunted-looking or charming and cozy — depending on who you talk to. Complete with hardwood floors, tall ceilings, large windows and en-suite bathrooms, bedrooms are undeniably "nicer" than those on campus. Each room is painted a unique color and maintained well enough that there isn't a need to cover every square inch with posters as students often do on the concrete walls of Ross. The Inn's two common spaces, one downstairs and one upstairs, offer a cozy and peaceful escape from the buzz of campus. Complete with a backyard overlooking Otter Creek, living at the Inn allows students to feel like they have an off-campus home without actually having to break into Middlebury's real estate market.

While the living spaces are undeniably better than Hepburn singles and Chrome doubles, they aren't perfect. For starters, the Inn's main house has five singles and five doubles, and the Carriage House — the makeshift housing in the parking lot — has four doubles. Most students would hope to live in a single by the time they are an upperclassman (although it looks like doubles are the reality for many juniors this year anyway). The Inn does not have laundry machines, so students enjoy free Middlebury Wash and Carry services, which are incredibly convenient — until an item needs to be washed a specific way, or you unexpectedly need to wash something other than on the Wednesday laundry collection day. The typical $325 per semester Middlebury Wash and Carry price tag suggests it may be more economical for the college to put a washer and dryer in the Inn — or that students are seriously overpaying for laundry services.

The Inn also lacks kitchen appliances, which can be problematic considering it is a fifteen- minute walk from the nearest dining hall. With an army of toasters and microwaves, along with the eight minifridges provided to the Carriage House, students can make do with microwave meals and leftovers. But, there's no denying that an oven or stove would be appreciated when Proc feels out of reach. That being said, if you are willing to walk two minutes and spend a bit of money, the snack offerings at Kinney Drugs or one of the three neighboring gas stations undoubtedly outperform those at Midd Xpress.

Anyone would agree that the Inn's beautiful living spaces would more than make up for its lack of laundry machines and kitchen appliances — if it were on campus. Like most things about the Inn, the fifteen minute walk to campus is both a blessing and a curse. Morning walks in the warm fall weather are a great time to catch up with friends and family over the phone, while the lack of street lights can make the walk home a bit unsettling. On cold and wet Saturday nights, students are faced with an unfortunate choice: sleep on an Atwater couch or brave the fifteen minute pitch-black walk home in pouring rain?

During the week, the thirty-plus-minute round trip to the Inn makes it difficult to return home during busy class days, which can be upsetting when all you want is a calm space to relax during the busy academic day. I once carried a mail center package around campus with me to two classes, the athletic center and the dining hall before finally making it back to the Inn. On the other hand, the inability to rest in bed certainly increases productivity, as students at the Inn have no choice but to stay on campus and study between classes.

During the week, the location isn't a major problem for students with cars, or for students with friends with cars. The drive to campus is less than five minutes, and Inn parking spots are free. And, while on-campus parking availability can be a problem for drivers who don't get any sort of on-campus parking priority, it certainly isn't for the two Carriage House students who ride electric scooters to class every day.

If I could redo my fall 2023 housing draw, I would choose the Inn all over again. None of its inconveniences are insurmountable, and having friends with cars makes the location only a minor drawback. The Middlebury campus can often feel disconnected from the town, and living at the Inn gives students a taste of what living in Middlebury actually looks like. While the college should seriously consider investing in Inn kitchen appliances and laundry machines, and maybe discontinue use of the parking lot Carriage House, I'm grateful for my fall at the Inn. I wouldn't trade my evenings watching the sunset from the Inn rooftop or my Monday morning walks to campus for on-campus housing any day.

"Sarah Says": What comes next?

Op-Ed

***Sarah Miller** is a member of the class of 2024 and an Editor At Large.*

On a semi-weekly basis Sarah Miller shares her thoughts on culture and campus life.

There's nothing quite like your final parents weekend to hammer home the fact that undergrad is coming to a close. As I toured my parents around campus one last time, I found myself thinking about the girl I was four years ago. I was a senior in high school the last time my future would feel secure.

Like many of you, I was accepted Early Decision to Middlebury. That December morning, the letter in my inbox came as a breath of fresh air; for so long I had labored under an asphyxiation of stress, when, with one word I could finally exhale.

I knew what my next four years would look like. No doubt I pictured many of the same images as you: striped wool sweaters, grassy quads, snowy winters, the turning of the famous New England leaves, friends from every corner of the country and long nights bent as easily over a book as bopping to the beat of a sweaty dorm party. Most of all, I pictured myself: eloquent, assured and somehow taller — a prototypical English major.

In a previous piece, I elucidated how I came to Middlebury to be a Creative Writing major, and more specifically, a writer. Since the age of seventeen, my greatest ambition has been to find a way to make a career of my writing, with every step in my academic process since then underpinned by that same goal.

Except for a brief summer spent contemplating a double major in Political Science, there was none of the major declaration hand-wringing which is practically a liberal arts rite of passage. I knew I wanted to be a Creative Writing major. This was a choice which sometimes incited my fellow freshmen to profess admiration for my bravery that always seemed slightly counterintuitive: to me, nothing had ever felt so solid, so sure.

Besides, even as an 18-year-old then I knew the bravery would not be in choosing to declare a Creative Writing major at Middlebury, but continuing to pursue creative writing after I left. One of the occupational hazards of my chosen vocation is a talent for talking. When adults ask me about my future, I riff on Ramen dinners, wax romantic on Carrie Bradshaw and gush over my commitment to my craft while still subtly suggesting an openness to law school.

Now, in the fall of my senior year, the time for talk is beginning to run out. It has become not only adults but also classmates who pose the question to me: What comes next?

In their mouths, the question becomes an imperative. Not just what comes next, but: figure out what comes next.

This past summer, most of my friends had internships in their respective career fields. I wrote a novel. Though I knew what I chose to do required immense self-discipline and effort, I always felt self-conscious when I was asked by adults or peers how I spent my summer. By not supplying my LinkedIn profile with an additional heading, I could not shake my imagined stench of failure. What did a draft of a novel matter compared to a LinkedIn post, much less to a return offer?

This is but one manifestation of the contradictions intrinsic to a Middlebury education. For an institution which preaches the value of the liberal arts, but sends thirty three percent of graduates into the world of finance and consulting, there seems to be a point when we decide it's time to put aside our old books and passions and embrace the financial value systems of the "real world."

One weekend, while visiting college friends over the summer, one of my friends said, offhand, "Well, most adults don't like their jobs." I tried to argue, but soon quieted, somehow chastened. If to be an adult was ultimately to get a job within a certain income bracket, irrespective of my intrinsic enjoyment, wasn't I, then, like Peter Pan, digging my heels in the dirt of artistic dreams and insisting on not growing up?

And there's always law school. For as much as I rave on Austen or DeLillo, I have been told, even reminded (like I might forget), how good of a lawyer I would be.

I am, after all, in many ways, a woman poorly suited to an unstable career path.

Like most Middlebury students, I like plans. There is hardly anything more comforting to me than school with its predictable rhythms of the Socratic-style classroom, clear systems of evaluation, and commendations for my right answers.

Just as I could picture myself at Middlebury, I can picture myself at law school. I see myself burning the midnight oil in the library stacks, taking the bar exam, landing a job in some major city and working brutal hours, but, if I am lucky, with a salary I could convince myself of as worth the toil. This is the path I know. It is the path of so many of my parents' friends and to which so many of my friends now aspire.

I wish I knew where I would be a year, two years or five years from now.

But to embark on the dream that lies before me is to embrace uncertainty as my bedfellow. It is to know I will watch my college friends make more money than me. I will watch them settle into grad school and stable jobs while I struggle in front of my computer screen, toiling for the chance to make my living in one of the world's most existentially lonely professions.

Law is as difficult and demanding of a career as you're likely to find. For some it's a noble path, but for me, choosing to pursue law would represent cowardice, grasping for some approximation of stability instead of daring to brave the unknown.

Writing is a shot in the dark, the opposite of the sure thing and, fittingly for a student of this college, the road less traveled.

When I was seventeen, I attended a selective writing intensive run by the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Before we "graduated" from the program, the program director, Stephen Lovely, gave us a speech. He told us that while at this moment people encourage our writing as a hobby useful to our college applications, their support would change to resistance once we began to consider it as a career. But, he encouraged us to stick with it, because if we were writers, then to neglect writing would rob our lives of an essential element.

Writing is one of the few subjects for which I assume the guise of a proselytizer. Writing is the thing that lights my soul on fire, a forum for my best self which somehow manages to make use of my faults (my neuroticism, my ceaseless analytics, my blustering, bleeding heart) and transfigure them into matter better than the sum of my parts.

So, like many of my fellow seniors, I don't have an answer for where I will be a year from now.

Among the famous poet Mary Oliver's more Instagramable quotes is a question: "Tell me, what is your plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

Though it might sound hokey, at the end of the day isn't it the only question worth asking?

Sometimes I am overcome by how little I know compared to my high school self, but I have never been more assured of my purpose. It's time for me to tune out the noise of my peers' plans which are for lives and ambitions so different and almost antithetical to my own and, for the first time in my life, truly jump.

The Middlebury Campus

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The Middlebury Campus

EDUCATION OVER ERASURE: THE CHAPEL AND CANCEL CULTURE AT MIDDLEBURY

Editorial

The editorial represents the the opinion of The Middlebury Campus Editoral Board

Susanna Schatz

It has been two years since Middlebury removed the name of John A. Mead from the Middlebury Chapel following a unanimous vote by the College's Board of Trustees. In 1914, Mead and his wife made a donation — equivalent to more than two million in today's dollars — to build a new chapel on the "highest point" of campus. Mead, however, was an advocate of eugenic theory both in policy and in legislation, speaking in favor of the potential benefits of marriage restrictions, sterilization and segregation. The chapel renaming followed the Vermont government's efforts earlier in 2021 to "sincerely apologize and express sorrow and regret" for the state's complicity in the eugenics movement, including the forced sterilization of over 250 Vermonters.

While we are grateful that the centerpiece of our campus is no longer represented by the name of a eugenicist, we urge the college to follow through on educational efforts surrounding the issue of eugenics in Vermont, instead of merely virtue signaling through the name removal. Moreover, we see the removal of Mead's name from the chapel as an opportunity for students at Middlebury to reflect on the importance of discussion and debate around critical issues, not simply erasure of past wrongdoings.

In March 2023, former Vermont governor Jim Douglas '72, executive-in-residence at the college who frequently teaches political science classes, filed a 79-page complaint in the Vermont Superior Court alleging that the school breached its contract with the estate of Governor John Mead by removing the Mead name from the chapel. Douglas also described the removal of Mead's name from the chapel as an example of "cancel culture" at the college. "Cancel culture is alive and well at Middlebury, so, for now, I'll celebrate alone," Douglas wrote in a May 2022 op-ed in the New York Sun referencing his decision to boycott his 50th reunion.

A month later, Middlebury filed a 37-page motion to dismiss the lawsuit, claiming a lack of evidence that the contract was conditional on the usage of the Mead name in perpetuity and a lack of legal standing from a plaintiff. Douglas and the Mead family are not seeking monetary compensation for the removal of the name and instead wish for the college to restore Mead's name to the chapel in the form of a plaque that also explains eugenics, Mead's speech advocating for eugenics and Middlebury's own complacency in the movement.

We as an Editorial Board, however, are not focused on the technicalities of Douglas' lawsuit and the contractual issue of the chapel's name. The heart of the issue for us, rather, is about education on historical wrongdoings, such as the eugenics movement in Vermont. We feel mostly positively about the college's decision to remove Mead's name, given that Mead participated in the American history of eugenicist beliefs. However, instead of carrying out a community conversation about Mead and eugenics, the letters of "Mead" were removed from the chapel without advance notice and under the cover of darkness. The removal leaves the letters of "chapel" imbalanced, off-kilter on the building and without a proper name. Such abrupt removal of the name alone, without the accompaniment of educational initiatives, is just an act of virtue signaling on the part of the college.

The erasure leaves an emptiness and cancellation, rather than information for visitors about both Mead and the college's disgrace and indiscretion. While the college has formed an education committee on the chapel, writing in an April 2023 email to the college community of the committee's purpose to "develop recommendations for engaging with [history] so we can learn from it," the committee has not taken any tangible public steps toward education since its creation two years ago. Simply removing the name from the building is the easiest, yet least substantive, way for the college to appear like it is making amends for giving one of the most important buildings on campus a controversial name and for the history of the college's own eugenicist beliefs.

Given the college's own history of promoting eugenicist ideas through its course offerings in the early 20th century, the college is incorrect to use Mead as a scapegoat for its own wrongdoings. As a recent column by the Boston Globe's Jeff Jacoby revealed, Middlebury faculty and administrators were directly advocating eugenics in the years after Mead served as Governor of Vermont. Jacoby reported that Paul Moody, president of the college from 1921 to 1945, was vehement about the inferiority of French Canadians in the wider community. 'The whole French Canadian population could be wiped out of Middlebury and no one would miss it,'" Moody told Henry F. Perkins, a University of Vermont professor and chair of a statewide committee on eugenics.

As Douglas addresses in his complaint, the chapel naming debacle is related to the issue of cancel culture and the lack of diversity of political thought on liberal campuses like Middlebury. There are not many speakers of diverse views invited to campus, especially since the Charles Murray disaster in 2017, and even when speakers with divergent beliefs are invited, their events often don't get a lot of attendance. This is no surprise: Only 7% of respondents in Middlebury's Zeitgeist 5.0 survey identified as even "leaning conservative." According to the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education's 2024 free speech rankings, Middlebury was number 233 of 248 colleges for free speech, based on criteria of "comfort expressing ideas," "administrative support" and "openness." In our experience, Middlebury classrooms are often echo chambers where similarly minded professors and students agree with one another without taking genuinely varied or controversial stances.

The college's erasure of Mead is reflective of a broader culture of cancelation and silencing when it comes to critical topics at Middlebury. While some spaces and pockets of students on campus certainly foster genuine discussion, we find that there is often a marked lack of meaningful conversation about controversial topics on campus. Students either try to "out woke each other" or remain silent, scared of being canceled by their peers. If students are not able to engage meaningfully with ideas with which they disagree, we fear that silence will manifest itself in dangerous ways. There is a serious risk in how many people here currently assume ideological homogeneity on campus. We call for general self-reflection; students must consider how Middlebury, like many liberal spaces in our polarized country more broadly, can be an echo-chamber and a breeding ground for automatic cancel culture, and balance this with efforts to welcome more conversations of diverse opinions.

This editorial hopes to break that silence with a call for introspection from students, faculty, administrators and the institution itself on how we isolate ourselves from disagreement and bury the difficult reality of the college's history.

Our hope is that the educational committee will soon publicize its work and spark discussions on these topics on campus, but it must not be left to one single committee to do so. In writing what is perhaps to be our most contentious editorial thus far, we are finally addressing a topic our organization has not editorialized on for over two years in order to right the college's past wrongs and for progress to be made on campus — no matter the consequences, controversy or cancellation.

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Seven questions with Winnie Wang '24, women's cross country

By CHARLIE KEOHANE
Editor at Large

Winnie Wang '24 is in the thick of her final cross country season with the Middlebury Panthers. In addition to running, Wang, a neuroscience major and linguistic minor from Newton, Mass., is leading the pack as one of the captains of women's cross country. In this installment of seven questions, Wang discusses her running origin story, her favorite Vermont running route and what songs get her pumped for a race.

Charlie Keohane: I will start with the question everyone asks: How did you get into running?

Winnie Wang: I started running track in seventh grade, and I actually started as a sprinter and I really hated long distances. I also really lack hand-eye coordination. So I started as a sprinter, and one day, I was running a race and one of the coaches was like, "She looks so much more like a distance runner," so I was scratched out of the 100 [meter] and was put into the 800 instead. So that's how I got into distance running. I did not enjoy my first 800, but eventually I grew to like it. Then I did cross country the next season.

CK: Now that you are a senior, looking back on your Middlebury cross country career, are there any favorite memories that stand out?

WW: One was NESCACs my sophomore year. That was my first normal season since freshman year with Covid-19, so it was my first experience being at a really big meet and seeing just how hype we get. We also all dyed our hair pink. Just that whole build-up and knowing how fit and strong everyone was, and having the whole team there, was a really fun day. It was a fun reminder of why I love cross country so much. I was sick that day so I didn't even end up running but it was still one of my favorite days just because of how much excitement there was.

CK: As a captain this year, what is it like stepping into a leadership role?

WW: As an underclassman, I didn't realize how much work the captains did behind the scenes beyond just organizing practice, leading runs and organizing social events. I didn't realize how much background work there is, like helping out Bruce and Nicole, our coaches. One thing I've really loved about being captain is that it's helped me be a lot more in tune with the team; just being able to form closer bonds with a lot of teammates and checking in on people more regularly, I think, has given me really good insight into the team.

CK: What is something people might not know about running cross country?

WW: One big one is that even though we're all running our own race, cross country is very much a team sport. There's a big physical aspect to it, but your mental game is a really big part of your success in running. There is a lot of strategy over the course of a 6k for the women or an 8k for the men. You have a lot of miles to really think about what your next move is. Your ability to pass someone towards the finish line can make all the difference.

CK: Do you have a pre-race ritual?

WW: I do always wear the same sports bra when I race, but I try not to put too much emotional attachment to it. It just happens to be the most comfortable one. Usually, on the day of a meet, I really like getting ready with the whole team. A really big part of it is "Look good, feel good." We put on glitter eyeliner and bright blue mascara; we braid our hair. I feel like that is a really fun part of our pre-race routine.

CK: What's your favorite running route at Middlebury?

WW: Probably my favorite is going through Battell Woods, then you go to Munger St., which is a beautiful dirt road that is maybe three miles away from campus. You just get the best foliage, soft surfaces, which is always nice for the feet, and then you get gorgeous mountain views. You end up running past Happy Valley Orchard. That one always goes by really quickly.

CK: Last question, what is your running power anthem?

WW: It definitely changes all the time. As of lately we've been listening to a lot of "Meet Me Halfway" by the Black-Eyed Peas. I also really like old Selena Gomez, "Love You Like a Love Song."

Catch Wang and the rest of the team in action at the Connecticut College Invitational in New London, Conn., on Oct. 14.

Editor's note: This interview has been lightly edited for brevity and clarity.

JAMES MADISON / COURTESY PHOTO

Winnie Wang '24 is all smiles during her 6k race.

FREDDY MOSIER '23 PITCHES FOR GREAT BRITAIN IN THE EUROPEAN BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

By RYAN HEINZERLING
Sports Editor

Few athletes get the distinct honor of representing their country in sport. Even fewer of those athletes are from Division III colleges. Yet on Sept. 26, Freddy Mosier '23 took the mound for Team Great Britain in the European Baseball Championship, helping the British to an 11-10 victory over Italy.

Mosier, who was born to a British mother in London, where he lived for seven years, still holds a British passport and ties to his British roots, despite spending most of his life in the United States. He first played on the British national team at age 16.

Mosier was proud to have the opportunity to represent his home country after missing out on the World Baseball Classic last March.

"It's a great honor," Mosier said. "I honestly went into it thinking I wouldn't pitch at all because our team's stacked."

"Stacked" is an understatement: The team's roster has three active minor leaguers, including Harry Ford, the 12th overall pick in the 2021 Major League Baseball draft by the Seattle Mariners. Mosier emphasized that playing with such high caliber talent changed the way he thought about top level pitch sequencing.

"I had a lot of older guys who [had] more experience as my teammates," Mosier said. "I got the start against Team Italy, and the morning before the game I watched all the videos of past Italian games with one of the pitchers on the team who played for the Marlins and he was telling me how to sequence guys and read swings, stuff I never knew how to do... I was grateful those guys even talked to me."

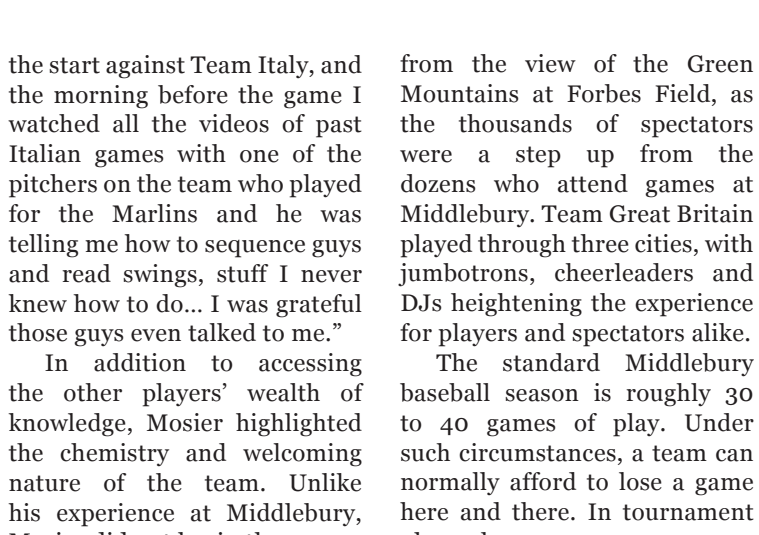
In addition to accessing the other players' wealth of knowledge, Mosier highlighted the chemistry and welcoming nature of the team. Unlike his experience at Middlebury, Mosier did not begin the season having established relationships with his teammates. But the team got to know each other through a week of training camp in Prague and the actual week of tournament play, coming together at the end of the tournament when the team won Britain's third ever silver medal — an experience Mosier compared to a full year of college compressed into two weeks.

The scale of play in Europe was also staunchly different from the view of the Green Mountains at Forbes Field, as the thousands of spectators were a step up from the dozens who attend games at Middlebury. Team Great Britain played through three cities, with jumbotrons, cheerleaders and DJs heightening the experience for players and spectators alike.

The standard Middlebury baseball season is roughly 30 to 40 games of play. Under such circumstances, a team can normally afford to lose a game here and there. In tournament play, however, every game counts.. The Brits finished the week 5-1, improving to a second place finish from seventh last year. Mosier pitched three and two-thirds innings during the tournament while giving up one earned run, six hits, and one walk. He also notched two strikeouts.

Up next, Mosier is looking to continue his baseball career in Germany playing semi-pro baseball until Oct. 21 and then move to Australia to join up with another semi-pro league near Brisbane. He enjoyed his experience competing at the European Baseball Championship and reflected proudly on his contribution to the team.

"It was fun to be a part of, I felt like I was a part of those wins. I closed out the game against Germany which was cool," Mosier added. "Our team did great, we just got beat [in] the last game. Spain hit the ball better than us, and that happens. That's baseball, it's hard to show it in a tournament style. We left it all out on the field."



COURTESY PHOTOS

Fred Mosier '23 winds up for a pitch for Team Great Britain.

Middlebury Equestrian Team shines in Vermont doubleheader weekend

By TING CUI
Staff Writer

COURTESY PHOTO
Three generations of Middlebury Equestrian Team captains at the Eddy Farm Show

Despite the persistent rain over the weekend, the Middlebury Equestrian Team made a shining start to their season by participating in the Vermont doubleheader. A total of 19 riders competed across a variety of events at University of Vermont's show at Imajica Farm in Williston, Vt. on Saturday, followed by Middlebury's own show at Eddy Farm on South Street on Sunday.

Pressure was high after the team's strong fourth-place rank in the region last year, but riders rose to the occasion. Clare Rados '27 and Susan Leibovitz '27 distinguished themselves with second-place finishes at UVM in the pre-novice and intermediate fences, respectively. Middlebury Equestrian Treasurer Brenae' Ervin '26 showcased her skills, securing two second-place finishes in the Intro competition. Other standout moments included first-place triumphs achieved by riders Caroline Lawler '27, Olivia Dumont '26, and Kristen Morgenstern '24 on Sunday.

"It meant a lot to be able to win at my home barn, surrounded by other team members and friends who might not have otherwise been able to see me compete," said Dumont, who is also one of the team's newly appointed captains. "It was also special because my parents had come to help with concessions, and this was their first time seeing me ride since I started college."

"For the first weekend back and with only three weeks of practice under our belts with the September school year start, we're all feeling happy overall and I'm so proud of the team," said Tess Hegarty '25.5, co-captain of the Equestrian Team.

The home show witnessed remarkable achievements, not only in rider's individual performances, but also in the teamwork and dedication exhibited in organizing and executing the event. Preparations for the competition began in May with a collaborative effort from team leadership coaches Kate Selby and Margaret Bojanowkski.

The organizing process for the home show involved registering riders for their respective events, managing entry fees, coordinating concession services, ordering ribbons for prize winners and ensuring the appointment of a judge who met the qualifications set by Intercollegiate Horse Show Association's standards. Unsurprisingly, a major facet of orchestrating an equestrian show revolves around the management and coordination of the equine participants.

"We had nine schools, 132 rides altogether during the show — some of them jumping, most of them on the flat — and you need a lot of horses to pull that off," Selby told The Campus. There were a total of 25 horses, made up of a combination of horses belonging to Eddy Farm, privately owned horses, and horses rented and transported from barns in New Hampshire and New York.

Periods of heavy rain during the UVM show on Saturday created some difficult circumstances. The rain the previous day flooded the ground and resulted in the team having to move everything indoors for the show on Sunday. Still, both shows ran smoothly.

"Putting on these shows requires a lot of teamwork and physical labor, but there's nothing quite like watching the sunrise over the Green Mountains while getting ready for a competition day." Hegarty said.

The riders commenced set up at 6 a.m. on Sunday, involving the preparation of the horses for the events, before competing themselves later in the day. Throughout the afternoon, riders also volunteered to help wherever needed. Their dedication extended to an cleanup effort, which lasted until 5 pm.

"When the last space was finally cleaned up, the whole team, our coaches and the amazing people at the Eddy Farm all applauded and congratulated each other," Dumont said. "The stress was finally over and we could officially say that our show was a success!"

Men's soccer remains undefeated after 10 games

By ANDRE PEIROVI
Contributing Writer

After 10 games of play, Middlebury men's soccer remains undefeated with seven wins and three ties so far this year. They have earned four wins and two ties in the NESCAC after starting off conference games at home against Amherst on Sept. 9, where Harper Nicholl '27 scored his first career goal midway through the second half to even out the game at 1–1. Since then, the team has maintained an impressive streak, including a strong 4–1 win over Hamilton College and a 2–0 shutout against Wesleyan University.

This is their best start to the season since 1999, and the team is showing no signs of slowing down after a 1–0 conference win over Colby College this past weekend. Senior captain and recent NESCAC player of the week Jordan Saint-Louis '24 was pleased with the team's run of form.

"It feels good, we're happy to continue to keep on putting up good performances," Saint-Louis said. "It's a testament to the work that the team put in over the summer and the values that we institute as a program."

Though the team has yet to lose a match, the players remain determined to improve and have bigger goals for the season that they hope to accomplish.

"I don't think anybody on our team is satisfied... we're all pretty hungry to keep on playing well and to keep improving," Saint-Louis said. "No one on our team is really looking at our record as if we've had a good season because it's all determined by the final outcome."

With only four games left, the team looks to continue their success as they gear up to play back-to-back away conference games against Trinity College on Oct. 14, followed by Connecticut College on Oct. 15.

"For everyone on the team, especially the guys that were here last year, we know that right now is the time to solidify our place as the best team going into the NESCAC playoffs," Saint-Louis said.

The team has been in the top five of the NESCAC standings since 2018, and this season they are hoping to not only finish on top of the leaderboards, but to win the NESCAC championship and go on to succeed in the NCAA tournament. The Panthers will play their final home game of the season against fifth-ranked Tufts University on Oct. 21 and their final away game against seventh-ranked Williams on Oct. 24 in Williamstown, Mass.

COURTESY PHOTO
Kyle Nilsson '25 controls the ball during the Panthers' 1-1 draw with Amherst

La Montagne sculpture brings early American Modernism to Middlebury

By ASA STONE
Staff Writer

Anyone who has walked down the hill by the chapel recently may have noticed a new addition to the landscape. In the shadows of the tree grove lies a sculpture of a figure — one that is difficult to interpret from afar. A number of students have expressed confusion over exactly what the statue depicts and how it came to be displayed outside Gifford Hall. Upon a closer look, as the bronze cast glimmers in the sun on a nice day, a plaque reveals the work's name: "La Montagne," French for "The Mountain," by Parisian-sculptor Gaston Lachaise.

Originally created in 1919, "La Montagne" is a clay sculpture of the artist's wife and muse, Isabel Dutaud Nagle Lachaise. The version of "La Montagne" on campus is a replica of the clay original.

Local contractors and excavators worked with the Middlebury College Committee on Art in Public Places to install the sculpture in the ground on Aug. 3.

From the planning to installation stages, getting "La Montagne" fully in place took a little over a year, according to Ken Pohlman, museum designer at the Middlebury College Museum of Art. Pohlman and Thatcher Littlefield, assistant registrar at the museum, are in charge of the installation and maintenance of the Committee on Art in Public Places' exhibits, which include Patrick Villiers Farrow's "Frisbee Dog" outside of Forest Hall and Tony Smith's "Smog" outside of BiHall.

Pohlman and Littlefield collaborated with the Committee on Art in Public Places and the Lachaise Foundation to bring "La Montagne" to Middlebury this past summer. Established in 1963, the Lachaise Foundation is a charitable trust founded under Isabel Lachaise's will with the goal of perpetuating Gaston Lachaise's artistic legacy.

"The foundation serves to protect, promote and perpetuate the legacy of the artist for the public benefit," Lachaise Foundation Director Paula Hornbostel told The Campus. One way the foundation pursues this mission is by working with colleges like Middlebury, as well as with public parks and museums, to display Lachaise's pieces through a process of gifts and loans.

The process begins with Hornbostel reaching out to the organization of interest, which in this case was Middlebury College, about the possibility of having a piece of art on loan to the college. The Committee on Art in Public Places deliberated for many months, Pohlman said, about whether the "La Montagne" piece was the right piece for the college's art collection. Clearly, the committee eventually decided that the sculpture would be a nice addition to the Middlebury artistic landscape, and the sculpture will remain on display on campus for the next five to ten years.

Before the finished version of "La Montagne" was installed, it had to be transformed from clay, which is generally an artform that erodes easily, into bronze with silver patina finish, a material more fit for harsh Middlebury winters. This process began with the creation of a rubber mold from the original clay sculpture covered in plaster. The piece was then recreated by the Modern Art Foundry in Queens, NY., the same foundry that was used by Lachaise himself in the early 20th century.

In order to understand Lachaise's art, it is important to understand his inspiration. Throughout his life, Lachaise attributed his artistic creativity to his wife, Isabel, and this admiration for women is reflected in "La Montagne."

"I think it is important for people to understand the story of Lachaise in order to understand the sculpture, because he just worshiped his wife, and held women in general on a very high pedestal," Hornbostel said.

Lachaise spoke of his inspirations for "La Montagne," and his art-work more generally, saying, "In Paris, I met a young American person who immediately became the primary inspiration which awakened my vision and the leading influence that had directed my forces. Throughout my career as an artist, I refer to this person by the word 'Woman.'"

Lachaise aimed to sculpt women as he saw them: full of power, strength and beauty, according to Hornbostel.

"He was capturing the essence of women that he respected," Hornbostel said.

Lachaise made a number of versions of "La Montagne," from the original completed in 1919 to the replica currently at Middlebury, and others in between. According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art website, "Lachaise emphasized the correspondence between the rotund figure of a reclining woman and the 'fertile rolling pastures, broad and soft as fecund breasts' found in the natural landscape." Lachaise's depiction of nude women was considered groundbreaking for the early 20th-century and many art history scholars regard Lachaise as a pioneer of early American Modernism.

CHARLIE DEICHMAN-CASWELL/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
La Montagne looks out at McCullough Lawn

Hornbostel added that while the placement of "La Montagne" may seem odd to some, its location is very intentional. "The original was made for the forest, and it was supposed to emerge as you came upon it," Hornbostel explained. The location of "La Montagne" among the trees outside Gifford Hall arguably achieved this goal, as Hornbostel described witnessing many surprised students stop in their tracks the first time they saw the sculpture.

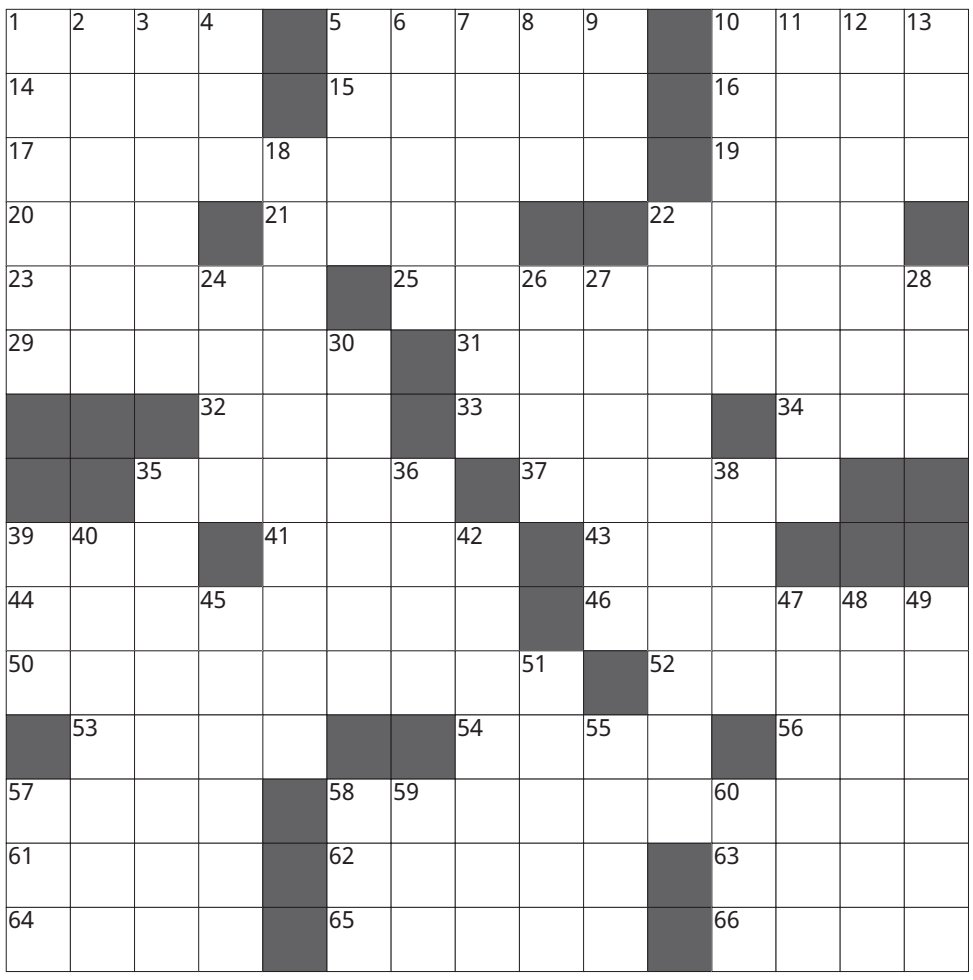
Pohlman echoed her sentiment, adding that they adopted the base of the sculpture to be a silver patina that matches the gray limestone of Gifford Hall behind it, so that the two appear to flow into one another. "We actually modified the base to something that was a bit lower and more intimate," he said. Tucked away in the shelter of the trees, yet facing towards the Green Mountains, "La Montagne" is a testament to the significance of placement and staging in expressing artistic meaning.

Pohlman acknowledged the possibility of backlash against this type of piece. "The idea of putting a nude woman sculpture on campus can cause some concern or negative press," he said.

Still, Pohlman stressed that the Committee on Art in Public Places and the late Lachaise agree about the intentions of the sculpture."We see the work less about the male gaze of the female body, and more about mother earth and the human body being integrated in the landscape," he added.

The Times They Are A-Changin'

Josh Harkins and Aaron Cohen



ACROSS
1 Sweet's counterpart
5 Jose Altuve, for one
10 Chatted with online, briefly
14 Stretching and stress-relief activity mentioned in the Vedas and the Upanishads
15 Animal that's always humping?
16 Word that means the same thing with an "s" added to the front
17 Kindle a romance, again
19 Countries' econ. activity
20 ___ Trapp family
21 Slang for someone obsessed with Japan
22 Hidden valley
23 Where 14-Across began
25 Where to find Hialeah and Coral Gables, with "the"
29 Andre the (tennis) Giant
31 Trip, again
32 Good thing for most baseball players
33 Polish
34 Spanish bear
35 When we 44-Across from
37 When we 44-Across to
39 Suffix with meth- and oct-
41 Degrees for artists, abbr.
43 Techno is a subgenre of it, for short
44 What our clocks do on the first Sunday in November
46 Convicted sex offender and "King of R&B"
50 Contemporary epic poem of the Odyssey
52 "___ little silhouetto of a man..."
53 School in SoCal, home of the Tritons
54 Word with hand and brides
56 Computer game genre, abbr.
57 Sheep sounds
58 Zonk out, again
61 "If wishing made ___"
62 Western mammal whose meat is leaner and tastier than beef
63 Willie who broke the NHL color barrier
64 Nonkosher sandwiches, for short
65 Makes ones opponent miss a tackle
66 Cold War USA opponent

DOWN
1 Author Plath
2 Chinese tea
3 Lake Victoria country
4 Battle of Britain group
5 Accutane target
6 Oregon capital
7 Verizon competitor
8 Gun, as an engine
9 ___ Miss
10 "That makes me happy!"
11 Scooted over
12 Sports channel
13 U.S. Dep. run by Alejandro Mayorkas
18 "They ransacked my place!"
22 Group that supposedly encompasses Middlebury students, but let's be real...
24 Part of Caesar's boast
26 Designer Gucci
27 Augustan or Portlandian
28 A year in Spain
30 "Love your work!"
35 Show
36 Medieval weapon
38 French souls, which you might find near Iowa State
39 Behind in the navy
40 Aztec language
42 Garb for a robber
45 Catches, as a steer
47 Outcasts
48 Flood barriers
49 Loud dog
51 Actor Willem
55 Fleming and McShane, for two
57 Food catcher, for baby
58 JFK successor
59 Actor Simu of "Barbie"
60 "Luckiest man on the face of the Earth," Gehrig

Challenging and Transcending Norms with Dreamers' Circus

By JOSHUA GLUCKSMAN
Staff Writer

An aura of anticipation filled the air last Saturday evening as a nearly full house packed into McCullough Student Center for the return of Nordic music group Dreamers' Circus. The Wilson Hall stage was packed with over a dozen instruments ranging from a traditional cittern (similar to a lute) to a modern electronic synthesizer, setting the group up for an exciting show. Made up of three highly acclaimed musicians, two from Denmark and one from Sweden, Dreamers' Circus returned to campus on Oct. 7 as part of their fall 2023 tour after performing at Middlebury three years ago, just before the Covid-19 pandemic. As Ale Carr, Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen and Nikolaj Busk took to the stage, with the lights beginning a colorful, patterned dance, it felt like a triumphant and long-anticipated return for the traditional Nordic band.

The group's musical repertoire is rather hard to define, drawing on an eclectic variety of traditional Scandinavian and modern music traditions. Incorporating multiple generations of music into their show, Dreamers' Circus began with slow, hypnotic and traditional-sounding folk music, yet ended with a techno-sounding beat to the tune of one of the members whistling to techno-synth beat.

Audience member Kevin Toohey described how the music provoked conflicting emotions for him.

"I felt initially drawn into the music and then I became aware of an emotional component to the sound, almost like having to cry, and simultaneously hearing this heroic, Scandinavian component that made me think of truth, beauty and goodness," Toohey told The Campus.

Not only was the group's setlist musically diverse — ranging from slower tunes that had audience members mesmerized with emotion to faster songs during which the entire audience was stomping and clapping in unison — but within each song lay a tension between the traditional and the modern. Annette Seidenglanz, a community member who attended the concert, described the performance as part of an important conversation about the role of creativity in challenging societal norms.

"I have heard indigenous artists say that it is important to honor tradition but if the work is not also innovative, then it's no longer a living art and the traditions will become empty of feeling and die out," Seidenglanz said. "Dreamer Circus performance is full of creativity, musicianship through their traditional music. That's what makes it fresh and exciting."

Perhaps one of the more unique aspects of the Dreamers' Circus' performance was the visual and non-musical elements of the performance. The group used colored lighting for each of their songs to set a different tone as they switched between slow and fast, alternating between folk and techno music. The physical movements of the dancing musicians, who also made eye contact with one another and switched around their spacing on stage, further enhanced the audience's experience.

Sweden-based Carr, who is recognized as one of the best players of plucked string instruments in the Nordic musical tradition, mainly played the cittern and kannel, an Estonian plucked string instrument. Easily the most physically dynamic performer on stage, Carr moved deftly from sitting to standing, having his eyes closed to intently staring into the eyes of his bandmates. Reflecting on what physicality means to him, Carr told The Campus that he sees movement as necessary to have a fully embodied experience of music.

"The music isn't in my instrument but it's living in my whole body," Carr said. "A phrase isn't just in my fingers but it's in my feet and my shoulders too."

COURTESY PHOTO
Ale Carr, Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen and Nikolaj Busk of Dreamers' Circus

Dreamers' Circus is also committed to relying heavily on improvisation in their shows, selecting their setlist on the day of each performance, and encouraging themselves to improvise their physicality on stage. The group also chooses the specific lighting for each show to reflect both the mood of each song they are playing that day and to allow for a wide range of interpretations from the audience.

Audience member Lucia Snyderman '23.5 picked up on how important mood and emotional relatability is to the group's music. She also reflected on how universal the shared experience of listening to a musical group perform can be.

"Music transcends all boundaries between people and connects people of all ages and backgrounds, and what this folk music does is also pushes boundaries and lets you feel what you want to," Snyderman said.

The Dreamers' Circus will continue on their fall U.S. tour this month with upcoming performances in Los Angeles and San Francisco on Oct. 13 and Oct. 15, respectively.

FIRST-YEAR SHOW DARES US TO "LOOK, DREAM, BEGIN" FIGHTING FOR OUR CLIMATE

By ARTHUR ROMERO DA VEIGA MARTINS
Contributing Writer

How does one tackle an anxiety-inducing, over-saturated and apocalyptic issue like climate change with wit, heart and a commitment to action? The answer for the team behind "Look, Dream, Begin" — the 28th-Annual First-Year Show performed at the Hepburn Zoo this past weekend — was a bold, theatrical extravaganza.

Directed by recent Middlebury graduate Madison Middleton '22.5, the show was a collage of 10 short plays, weaving together stories of cynical, market-oriented polar bears, an artificial intelligence model selling self-help books, guilt-ridden U.S. tourists unaware of their carbon footprint and mushroom-worshiping mystics to remind the audience that everyone is implicated in the climate struggle.

"Look, Dream, Begin" marked Middlebury's first time participating in the Climate Change Theatre Action, a biennial worldwide theater festival that coincides with the United Nations Conference of the Parties, a part of the UN Climate Change Conference. The festival was brought to Middlebury by dramaturge Maya Teiman '25.

"Theater doesn't usually come to people's minds when they think about ways to engage with climate change," Teiman wrote in the show's program.

For Marlow Saucier '24, an audience member and climate activist, the show's unique stance worked perfectly. "I'm very passionate about using art as a way of processing climate change, so I appreciated the show's call to action," Saucier said.

As with climate action, it takes bravery to take the stage, and the debuting artists lived up to that calling spectacularly. Dressed as fancy but starving polar bears, Max Blumenthal '27 and Virginia Frau '27 drew audience laughter by advocating for "market-based solutions," like creating a delivery app to compensate for the lack of seals in the Arctic. Odette Castillo Pinto '27 made her debut on the Hepburn Zoo stage as "Consciousness," effectively calling out the environmental impact of well-meaning American spring breakers Nitya Kaul '27 and Edith Mauch '27.

Behind the scenes, Castillo Pinto told The Campus about being scared at the prospect of tackling an all-encompassing issue like climate change on stage. Working with the cast, however, gave her a deeper insight into what is at the heart of the show's message.

COURTESY PHOTO
The first-year show brings climate change to the stage.

"We all give something to this world and we're in it together," Castillo Pinto said.

This feeling of camaraderie was shared by fellow cast member Claire Hatch '26, who was surprised by how fun the three weeks of intensive rehearsals leading up to the show were. When asked whether working on the show changed her approach to climate change, Hatch spoke of a newfound openness to how she takes action.

"I often thought of STEM fields as the only way to address it, but there are other things that I can do to address climate change, like the posters in the entrance or through theater," Hatch added.

The show production itself embodied an emphasis on climate awareness and the struggle of collective action that tied the skits together. Outside of the Hepburn Zoo theater, an exhibit of collages made in collaboration with Assistant Professor of Biology Greg Pask's Entomology class gave voice to endangered insects' indignation. "I am constantly worried that my babies won't have a safe place to grow up! #ProtectFutureGenerations," read a speech bubble next to a garden tiger moth.

All materials and costumes on the show's set were sourced from the college's Recycling Center or the theater department wardrobe. "We're showing an example of how to start making highly effective theater with no shipping, no purchasing except from local providers. We have to, as artists, as theater makers, consider the impacts of how we create," Middleton said, adding that even the parsnips used in one of the short plays were sourced from a local Vermont farm.

Bold and unafraid to take a stand on the root of the climate crisis, "Look, Dream, Begin" addresses our complacency with capitalism and the dangers of waiting for a perfect solution to this immense environmental crisis. At the same time, the show reminds us that change can start with imperfect action.

A passionate Moriah Thompson '25 concluded the show with a call to action: "Dream with us, then dare to begin." She continued, addressing the riveted audience: "What's your dream?"

As the curtain gave way to applause, the audience was left feeling that the best climate action is whatever one we decide to act on right now.

KNOLCI

Continued from page 1

a kale salad into the menu. Gieger was particularly excited about the pistachio dressing, she said, because she felt like it had the potential to change peoples' minds about kale's slightly bitter taste. Curly and red russian kale varieties made up the base of the salad, and garnished with edible flowers, the salad was a visual representation of the rows of flowers and leafy greens that greet visitors to the Knoll.

Gieger also highlighted that the choice to include multiple family-style dishes in the meal was more intentional than it may seem. At each step of the meal, Knolci coordinators made a conscious effort to embody the Knoll's focus on climate resiliency and food relocalization, and choosing family-style dishes over single portions played a large role in their effort to do so.

"We tried to do more family-style courses than we usually would do in a meal to reduce food waste, instead of portioning out on plates and having leftovers that way, trying to have people just take what they want, and then other people can take more if they want. Also with doing that, you reduce dish waste and the energy it takes to run that," Gieger said.

The kale salad was followed by winter squash and bean tostadas topped with tomatillo sauce, caramelized onions and a side of serrano peppers. The dish was meant to highlight tomatillos and delicata squash, which are some of the Knoll's highlight crops from year to year.

A crowd favorite of the night was the final plate before dessert: beet gnocchi with sage-and-lemon-verbena-infused brown butter and local goat cheese. The mildly earthy flavor of the beet gnocchi was complemented by the creamy yet tangy goat cheese, and the texture of the chewy, moist gnocchi was balanced by the chèvre's velvety taste, giving the dish a warm and comforting feel.

Finally, guests who saved room for dessert were treated to olive oil cake with basil ice cream and honey whipped cream or a vegan alternative, red perilla granita. The subtly sweet cake, saturated with olive oil, paired well with the fresh, crisp flavors of the basil ice cream, leaving its consumers dreaming of the dish for the rest of the night. Attendees were also offered a small cup of lemongrass and mint tea, a calming, yet refreshing end to a flavorful night.

After dinner, Dolci cleanup often produces a considerable amount of waste. Even after staff eat their share of the food and take home leftovers, there is still food wasted from unfinished portions and overestimated quantities. At last week's event, Knolci staff sent food to Weybridge House, Middlebury's special interest house focused on local food, so that minimal prepared food went to waste.

Reflecting on the event, Brakeley emphasized the feeling of interconnectedness it inspired.

"Knolci was a culminating celebration of experiential learning, connection across the college, and drawing on the strengths of student-powered learning here — in the most delicious and interconnected way," said Brakeley.

Knolci guests undoubtedly agree that the dinner was a strong testament to the culinary ingenuity and agricultural skill of the Middlebury community, and it was a privilege to witness such a powerful collaboration between two of Middlebury's beloved entities. Perhaps Knolci's most powerful takeaway, however, is its vision of a relocalized, regenerative and climate-conscious food system, which it presented in a resoundingly appetizing way.

MANAR AL-RIKABI/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Knolci served a delicious buttnerut squash.